



CELEBRATE A SMOKE-FREE MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day is a day to celebrate moms for who they are and all of the wonderful things they do. It is also a great time for moms to remember the important role they play in influencing the choices their kids make regarding tobacco use. Unfortunately, tobacco use among women remains a serious problem: over 18.5 million women currently smoke, an estimated 200,000 women die every year from smoking, and more than 86,000 kids have already lost their mom to smoking.¹

Moms who smoke can celebrate Mother's Day by quitting. And all moms, whether or not they smoke, can celebrate Mother's Day by taking a number of effective actions to protect their kids from becoming another one of the tobacco industry's addicted customers and victims. Even if they smoke, what moms say, how they act and the values they communicate through their words and actions have an enormous influence on whether or not their kids smoke.² All moms—smokers and nonsmokers alike—can also do a lot to protect their kids from secondhand smoke.

How Can Moms Keep Their Children From Smoking?

As a parent, you are one of the most important persons in a child's life, especially when it comes to cigarettes. You can make a big difference in the choices your kids make.

- If you smoke, quit. If you aren't successful at first, keep trying. Children from families who smoke are twice as likely to become smokers themselves; but parents who try to quit and talk to their kids about how addictive smoking is, why they want to quit and how important it is to never start can beat those odds.*
- Maintain a totally smoke-free home and car (even if you smoke).
- Educate your child about the dangers of cigarette smoking.
 - Talk about addiction and how hard it is to quit smoking.
 - Emphasize the *immediate* health effects, like stress, increased blood pressure and coughing.
 - Emphasize the effects of smoking on physical appearance, like face wrinkles.
 - Talk to your kids about how tobacco companies target them by trying to make tobacco use seem cool so they can addict them as life-long customers.
- Listen to what your child says and does about smoking and encourage your child when he/she makes good choices.
- Ask your child about his/her friends and their attitudes toward smoking. Discuss peer pressure and how to deal with it effectively.
- Clear up any misunderstandings your child might have about smoking (for example: not everybody is doing it, getting hooked can happen very quickly and quitting is very difficult).
- Make sure your kids' schools have strong and well-enforced no-smoking rules for kids and staff.
- Support federal, state and local tobacco-prevention efforts like higher tobacco taxes, funding for tobacco prevention programs and smoke-free laws.³

* For helpful information on quitting, see <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0247.pdf>.

How Can Moms Protect Their Children from Secondhand Smoke Harms?

Mothers who protect their children from secondhand smoke reduce the risk of smoke-caused health problems. Two out of every five children ages 3 to 11 are exposed to secondhand smoke in the United States.⁴ Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and compounds, including hundreds that are toxic and at least 69 that cause cancer.⁵ Maternal exposure to secondhand smoke during pregnancy raises the risk of low birth weight,⁶ and both smoking during pregnancy and secondhand smoke exposure increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).⁷ Secondhand smoke exposure also increases the chances that a child will suffer from coughs and wheezing, lower respiratory infections, acute and chronic ear problems, and exacerbations of asthma.⁸ The respiratory health effects of secondhand smoke may even persist into adulthood.⁹

How can you protect your child from secondhand smoke?

- If you smoke, quit smoking—or at least keep trying.* Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free help quitting smoking. You can also call your local office of the American Lung Association or American Cancer Society, talk to your doctor or sign up for a stop-smoking course.
- Don't let anyone smoke in your home. Make sure anyone who smokes only does so outside, away from open doors and windows. If you smoke, wear a "smoking shirt" and remove it before coming into contact with your child, especially infants; and never smoke while holding, feeding or bathing your child. Remember: smoking residues in a home or car can cause harm even when smoking is no longer taking place.
- Never smoke in the car, especially when your child is a passenger.
- Avoid leaving your child with someone who smokes or in smoky environments. Ask about smoking and smoke-free rules and practices when choosing daycare centers or babysitters and even when leaving your kids at other people's homes. If your child is older, try to make sure that he/she does not take a job in a restaurant or other work place that allows smoking.¹⁰
- If your state or community is not already smoke-free, get involved in local efforts to support a strong smoke-free law. Talking to someone from your local office of the American Lung Association or American Cancer Society is a great place to start.

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, April 27, 2016 / Laura Bach

More information on women, girls, and tobacco is available at

http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/fact_sheets/toll/populations/women_girls/

¹ CDC, "Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults - United States, 2005 - 2014," *MMWR* 64(44):1233-1240, November 13, 2015, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6444.pdf>. HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014, http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_260.pdf. Leistikow, B, et al., "Estimates of Smoking-Attributable Deaths at Ages 15-54, Motherless or Fatherless Youths, and Resulting Social Security Costs in the United States in 1994," *Preventive Medicine* 30(5): 353-360, May 2000.

² Newman, I, et al., "The influence of parental attitude and behavior on early adolescent cigarette smoking," *Journal of School Health*, 59(4):150-2, April 1989. See, also, Distefan, J, et al., "Parental influences predict adolescent smoking in the United States, 1989-1993," *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 22:466-74, 1998.

³ For more detail and cites to sources, see TFK Factsheet, *How Parents Can Protect Kids From Becoming Addicted Smokers*, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0152.pdf>.

⁴ CDC, "Vital Signs: Disparities in Nonsmokers' Exposure to Secondhand Smoke—United States, 1999-2012," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, February 3, 2015; data cited is for years 2011-2012. http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6404a7.htm?s_cid=mm6404a7_w

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), *How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking Attributable Disease: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2010. HHS, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006, http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/sgr_2006/index.htm.

⁶ *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children are Hurt by Secondhand Smoke, 2006, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/report/>.

⁷ HHS, The health consequences of smoking: a report of the Surgeon General, Atlanta, GA: HHS, CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004, http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2004/complete_report/index.htm; HHS, The health consequences of involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke : a report of the Surgeon General, Atlanta, GA: HHS, CDC, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/report/>.

⁸ The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children are Hurt by Secondhand Smoke, 2006, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/report/>.

⁹ Pugmire, J., et al., "Respiratory Health Effects of Childhood Exposure To Environmental Tobacco Smoke in Children Followed to Adulthood," American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine (186)1: 1758, 2012.

¹⁰ TFK Factsheet, *How Parents Can Protect Kids From Becoming Addicted Smokers*, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0152.pdf>.